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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/06/2018
TAGS: [FR](#) [PHUM](#) [SP](#) [UK](#)
SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST: UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Classified By: IO DAS Grover Joseph Rees, for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (C) This is an action request. Please see paragraphs 3 and 5. Three of the five regional groups will have contested elections for the UN Human Rights Council: Eastern Europe, WEOG, and the Asia Group. Mission is requested to assess the likely outcome of a) the six candidacies for four Asia group slots and b) the three candidates for the two WEOG slots in the upcoming Human Rights Council election, to be held May 21 in New York. Mission is also requested to assess whether U.S. assistance on behalf of our preferred candidates would be likely to help their chances for election (particularly with respect to East Timor), and if so what type of assistance would be most effective.

Asia Group Candidacies

12. (C) The U.S. is particularly concerned with the outcome of the Asia group election where there are six candidates (Bahrain, Japan, South Korea, Timor-Leste, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) for only four slots. Three of these candidates --- Japan, Korea, and Timor --- have generally good domestic human rights records as well as good voting records on U.S.-supported human rights initiatives in multilateral fora. The United States actively encouraged Timor-Leste to run for the Council, and Department officials have since received mixed messages about Timor-Leste's chances for success.

13. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Department requests Post to quietly assess the chances of each of the six Asia Group candidates, and to determine whether U.S. assistance, and if so what type of assistance, would help Timor Leste's candidacy in particular.

Western Europe and Other Group Candidacies (WEOG)

14. (C) Three countries are running for the two open WEOG seats: France, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Apart from Canada, the United Kingdom is the closest U.S. ally on the Human Rights Council and can be a strong advocate for our shared interests at the Human Rights Council. Department officials have been told that France appears to have agreed to support Spain's lobbying efforts in West Africa in return for Spain's support of France's bid in Central and South America. Should such an agreement exist, it would run counter to the longstanding informal agreement between the permanent members of the UN Security Council (P-5) to support one another's candidacies for UN bodies.

15. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Post is requested to quietly assess the chances of the British, French and Spanish candidacies, to follow up discreetly with UK colleagues on the issues discussed in paragraph 4, and to advise whether U.S. assistance would be helpful to the UK's candidacy.

U.S. Position on UN HRC Elections

¶16. (C) Voting instructions for the HRC elections will be forthcoming in septel. While the longstanding U.S. policy is not to reveal our vote before or after a UN election, it is in our interest to encourage an outcome favoring countries with strong human rights records. The Department will be assessing the pledges and records of all candidates and will provide instructions accordingly.

Reporting Deadline

¶17. (U) Department requests response by Monday, May 12 to the attention of Amy Ostermeier, IO/RHS.

¶18. (U) Department appreciates Mission's assistance with this request.

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